Voters identity cards

3973. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Election Commission has issued instructions to the States where the elections to State Assemblies are due to be held later this year to accelerate the process of issuing voter identity cards;

(b) whether the voter identity cards have been issued to all the eligible persons in States going for Assembly polls this year;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether the persons not holding the voter identity cards will be eligible to vote?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) The Election Commission of India has informed that it has issued instructions to the States of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Mizoram and NCT of Delhi, where the elections to State Assemblies are due to be held in the later half of this year, to accelerate the process of issuing voter identity cards. These States have been asked to achieve at least 85-90% target before 30.09.2003 i.e. well before the general elections to their respective Legislative Assemblies.

(b) The Election Commission of India has informed that so far voter identity cards have not been issued to all the eligible electors in the aforesaid States.

(c) The Election Commission of India has informed that the electoral roll is the basis for issuing voter identity cards to the registered electors. The vote identity cards work has been primarily delayed due to revision of electoral rolls in these States with reference to 01.01.2003 as the qualifying date. In the State of Chhattisgarh and Mizoram, the rolls have been finally published on 6th January, 2003 and in Rajasthan, final publication has been made on 28.02 03. In NCT of Delhi, the rolls of all except one constituency have been finally published by 20.03.03. In case of Madhya Pradesh, the electoral rolls programmes had to be revised from time to time due to various reasons and as per the existing schedule, the rolls are to be finally published on 30th June, 2003. This delay in the revision of rolls has delayed the process of issuing the voters identity cards. There are also some other reasons, like delay in sanction of funds, inadequate infrastructural facility, inclement weather, tough geographical

terrain, poor response of the electors at the designated photographic locations etc., that have affected the programme adversely.

(d) The Election Commission of India has informed that it will review the position in these States for compulsory production of voters identity cards during the polls at an appropriate time and will issue necessary orders. However, in the recent past as a matter of abundant caution, the Commission has permitted the old electors who have not obtained their voter identity cards, to exercise their franchise to vote at the said elections, provided their identity is otherwise established by production of one of the alternative documents prescribed by the Commission.

Litigant friendly judicial reforms

3974. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to initiate a series, litigant friendly judicial reforms in the near future;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government would also put in place a system to ensure quick delivery of justice to the litigants; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) to (d) The canvas of Judicial reforms is very wide, encompassing wide spectrum of issues concerning different departments of the Central Government. Out of the main litigant friendly areas of judicial reforms is reduction of delays in courts. A series of steps have been taken by the Government on the front of Judicial reforms. High Courts have been requested to implement the recommendations of the Malimath Committee to streamline procedure which will, inter-alia, expedite disposal of pending cases. Government have also been constantly reviewing the accumulation of arreas in courts. Besides reviewing and increasing judge strength of High Courts every three years, Government have set up/encouraged alternative modes of dispute resolution including conciliation, mediation and arbitration. Special tribunals like Central Administrative Tribunal, State Administrative Tribunals, Income Tax Appellate Tribunal, Labour Courts, Consumer Courts etc., have been set up to expedite the disposal of cases. Information Technology is being used in generation of causelists, providing information to the litigants/advocates etc., for speedy disposal of cases. A Pilot project